

PEACE NEWS

No. 251

APRIL 4, 1941

2d.

The Barrier To Freedom

LORD HALIFAX'S first speech as British Ambassador to the USA is worthy of careful study. He was tactful enough to identify the British peace-aim with that enunciated by President Roosevelt as the American. The four freedoms defined by the President were developed into:

- (1) The right to think, speak and act freely within the law and to have free access to the thoughts of others;
- (2) The right of free association, both national and international, with their fellow-men;
- (3) The right to live without fear of aggression, injustice, or want;
- (4) The right to believe and worship as conscience may dictate.

In the abstract, these freedoms are very well. That they are desirable, no-one would deny; or even that they are fundamental to a good life in society. But how are we to know that these freedoms are being fought for in this war? You may tell the average Briton that Britain is fighting for his right to live "without fear of aggression, injustice, or want"—and perhaps you may persuade him—but is it true?

If the British working-man is relatively free of the fear of want today, is it not solely because the nation is engaged in war? Because the nation is at total war, his services are in demand as they have never been in time of peace. And the chances are that, when the war is over, he will be thrown upon the scrap-heap again. It is a subtle, but fearful perversion of the truth, therefore, to tell him that he is fighting in order that we shall be free from the fear of "injustice and want". While he fights, he has this freedom, when the fight is over, he may lose it.

Unless, of course, the fight never is over. On this point the latent contradiction in Lord Halifax's thinking becomes manifest. "It will be of no value," he says, "to force unwanted associations upon unwilling nations." The association in the new European order must be based on free consent. But what of Germany? "After the war is over, and until we can be satisfied of German co-operation, I can hardly doubt that the nations resolved to preserve both peace and freedom must needs retain sufficient armed strength to make their will effective."

What Halifax appears to envisage is a voluntary combination of nations committed to the maintenance of the "four freedoms"—of which the most immediately important is in fact dependent upon organization for war, which excludes the other three—combined in a military alliance for keeping Germany under control. But Russia, obviously, will not be a member of this combination: neither will a good many other European countries whose governments have no affection for the "four freedoms" which they regard as largely illusory. These infidels presumably will combine in a different kind of military confederation and the two will prepare for war against each other.

That, undoubtedly, will keep the workers on both sides in employment—and in slavery. The free men will have guns instead of butter. They will be so busily engaged in preparing to defend their four freedoms that they will not notice they have gone.

It will never cease to astonish us that so superficial a conception of the world revolution in which we are now involved should be so firmly established in the minds of responsible men. The elementary fact, which the simplest pacifist grasps, that "freedom" can never again become a reality, unless national armaments and military alliances are abolished, is apparently outside their mental range.

Why not say it plainly, and say it now: that there is no hope of freedom or security in Europe, unless Germany is a willing collaborator in the new order which we are determined to create? Why do we always avoid this simple thing? Is it because we are afraid that it might bring peace?

VERA BRITTAIN pleads for

This article is not written for pacifists. If any non-pacifist, official or unofficial, comes across it, I ask that he read its appeal. For an appeal it is, and a warning—anxious, considered and urgent.

If I thought I had the slightest chance of getting it accepted by a large-circulation, non-pacifist daily, I should not publish it here.

LAST night, for the first time for weeks, I "listened-in" to the news. In London I hardly ever do so—perhaps because too much news is happening all round us, but even more because the memory of friends who have lost sons or homes renders nauseating the narration of aerial combats or devastating raids in the mood of a cup-tie final.

But last night I happened to be in the lounge of a large hotel on the coast when the news broadcast came on. Outside, in the brilliant moonlight, the rocky shore lay silhouetted against the shining sea with the black sharpness of a target photograph. The exquisite scene brought back to my mind some words spoken by Dr. Hu Shih, now Chinese Ambassador to Washington, after he had described a Japanese air raid on a Chinese hospital to the New York PEN Club in 1937.

POIGNANT CONTRAST

"After it was all over," he said sadly, "I stood beside my window and looked at the beautiful moonlight flooding the city. Once again the night was peaceful, and I mourned over the evil in humanity which could use for such a purpose this lovely moonlight so well suited to poetry and romance."

Then the news was turned on, recalling me to 1941 and the even more extensive use of "beautiful moonlight" for grievous purposes, for the announcer described in triumphant language Britain's "heaviest raid of the war on Germany." Exuberantly we were told of the "immense fires" started in various parts of Berlin; the destruction of industrial plants at Bremen; the changing colours of fires as they made their way "through stores and inflammable material"; the "very long" factory building which was soon

Threefold Encouragement

I AM glad to record the beginning of a recovery in the Fighting Fund after two disappointing weeks: £36 15s. 3d., making the total £1,648 14s. 4d. Also, I have received the first parcel of gold and silver trinkets for disposal for the Fund.

There has also been a sudden and surprising increase in the letters of appreciation of Peace News. On behalf of the staff as a whole, I express my gratitude to the senders.

THE EDITOR

Please make all cheques, P.O.s and money orders payable to Peace News Ltd and crossed "a/c Payee", and address them to the Accountant, Peace News, 8 Blackstock Road, London, N.4.

REALITY in the NEWS

"well alight"; the glow in the sky which could be seen for a hundred miles by returning pilots. "Hamburg too," it was announced in tones of gloating satisfaction, "had a sleepless night", since after a brief lull in the raid, further relays of aircraft added "a long postscript of destruction." (This, according to later American sources, included the US Consulate.)

I do not want, for the moment, to produce any pacifist argument against aerial bombardment and the damage it causes. I want to identify myself with the many sincere men and women who, while hating war, have genuinely persuaded themselves that this war and its devilish expedients are necessary to the task of "destroying Hitlerism." And I want to ask them if there is nothing that they can do to change the indecent gleefulness with which, in an ever-increasing crescendo of excitement, occurrences profoundly tragic in all their details are presented to this nation of listeners. Must even the preachers and teachers amongst them continue to be silent?

AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD

The same news could, after all, be presented so differently without challenging the policy which it describes. Descriptions of our air offensives could be given quietly and objectively; they might even include some reference to the genuine regret felt by ordinary civilized humanity when confronted with the performance of terrible but unavoidable duties. "We have no choice but to tell you of these things. We deplore their necessity. But you know that we are obliged to send our young pilots out on these missions of destruction if this war is to be won."

Such a presentation would still be war propaganda. It would still emphasize the necessity of the conflict. But it would be propaganda which even the opponents of war could regard as decent and dignified.

Now I shall certainly be told, particularly by one political group, that my objection to the current method of news presentation is due to a hypersensitive, sentimental, and emotional disposition (with the inevitable addendum that it is to be hoped that America will not regard this squeamishness as typical of British opinion).

No doubt this unflattering portrait is true—though it is remarkable of how many of my correspondents it would be true also. Many who send me letters simply as the author of a biography or novel that they have read, specifically refer to the way in which news of the war is nowadays presented. Only last week, a young mother from Aberdeen wrote to me of "these bitter times, when one is daily called upon to hear or read war news in which is implicit the most profound suffering of both mind and body—albeit delivered with a breezy geniality totally at variance with the dreadful realities of the situation."

The only point I want to make in reply to criticism is that two years ago my most unemotional acquaintances would have felt the same revulsion as I do to the boastful excited descriptions of damage and destruction which we now hear daily. The difference between us, as they print out, is that they have "adjusted

themselves," whereas I have failed to do so. In the name of morale, they have deliberately trained themselves to be unmoved by suffering which would once have horrified and shocked them.

PROCESS OF DEGENERATION

How many of us ask ourselves today what happens to a nation which sacrifices sensitive pity and human affections to "toughness"? How many realize that the qualities which we are setting up as ideals of behaviour are precisely those in which the Nazis have trained the German people? How many suspect that the "adjustment" now so universally admired may in fact be a process of moral degeneration?

The road to brutalization (however successfully camouflaged as "getting adjusted" or "taking it") is a steep and slippery slope. Even in our peacetime lives we have deliberately to fight for the triumph of our finer qualities. Civilization itself might well be defined as the gradual widening of the area of sensitivity and the growth of man's power to view human problems with imaginative compassion. In all of us the ape and the tiger are never far beneath the surface; the transformation of our civilized emotions into callousness and indifference is only too easy. And it has political and social consequences which we do not realize until all hope of preventing them is past.

This week I have met several people who thought the news as broadcast "splendid", but cried out with disgust when the daily papers printed stories of a looter who rifled a nurse's handbag while she attended to air-raid casualties in a restaurant. They did not perceive that the growth of callousness and the growth of looting are inter-related phenomena, or remember that long periods of war, with their cheapening of the value of human life, are invariably followed by outbreaks of gangsterism and murder. The "little tough guys" of today become, at best, the Borstal boys of tomorrow.

POST-WAR DANGER

The political consequences of demoralized standards seldom reveal themselves during war, but once the fighting is over, they become a severe embarrassment to any statesman who wishes to exercise wisdom and judgment. We need look no further back than the tying of Lloyd George's hands at Versailles by the Khaki Election and the demand of press-inflamed public opinion that Germany be "squeezed until the pips squeak."

Cruelty, sown as the wind, springs up as the whirlwind. The callous blockade of 1919 bears fruit as the brutal Nazism of 1939. Gloating presentations of appalling military expedients in 1941 are certain—and the longer the war lasts the more certain they are—to create a future demand that the helpless shall suffer, the weak be oppressed, the vanquished be annihilated. And in such demands lie the shadows of future wars and the images of further catastrophic epochs in which human civilization may well disintegrate into the chaos whence it came.

A PACIFIST COMMENTARY

EDITED BY "OBSERVER"

THE revolution in Yugoslavia is perhaps Hitler's most dramatic set-back since the war began. Last week, I hazarded the guess that Yugoslavia would probably avoid military occupation by Germany, but I said that that alone would not be much help to the Greeks. But what has happened in Yugoslavia is a very present help to the Greeks: for it looks as though Yugoslavia were determined not to permit the passage of German troops. If that proves to be the case, and if Yugoslavia is united enough to stand stubbornly to her new ground, Greece has had an eleventh-hour deliverance which she has richly deserved.

No doubt the intense dislike of Italian imperialism felt by the Yugoslavs—which they dislike even more heartily than the Greeks do—has counted for much in this resurgence. Hence the tremendous excitement caused in Belgrade by the false rumour that Mussolini had been assassinated and an Italian revolution broken out; and the converse depression in Rome. What we may fairly conclude from it all is that Yugoslavia is determined not to lend a hand to any German action which will restore the badly-shaken power of Italy. The more Italy is weakened—and Admiral Cunningham's victory over the Italian fleet and the capture of Keren are two severe blows—the better able is Yugoslavia to demand fair terms from Germany.

If this is the key to the new policy of Yugoslavia, it would help to explain the puzzling attitude of the Croats who were constantly reported to be strongly in favour of full acceptance of the German demands. Yet they have suddenly appeared as supporters of the new Government.

Peace-Aims

THERE seems to be a general consensus of opinion that Lord Halifax's recent speech in America represented the deliberate and considered policy of the Government in the matter of peace-aims. If that is so, it is a disheartening document; particularly as regards Germany. Mr. Brailsford's comment in Reynolds (March 30) is this:—

It warns the German people that their fate, if they lose this war, will be exclu-

Yugoslav Puzzle :: Germany's Economic Policy :: Mr. Herbert's "Postscript"

sion from all the benefits of our community. The League excluded them for five years: Lord Halifax hinted at a much longer period. During this period the victors are "to retain sufficient armed strength to make their will effective." In plain words, for an indefinite period, the Germans are to live under Anglo-American dictation.

The first comment on this is that it will postpone our victory, for every German will vow to die in the last ditch. Secondly, it will ruin our victory, for it condemns us to live out our lives in barracks. Thirdly, without German co-operation the world will be the poorer (to use Mr. Churchill's phrase) in "wealth and culture."

Mr. Brailsford's policy is revolution in Germany; but this revolution is to be stimulated by a definite British pledge to establish a true European community with naval and military forces internationalized. This is a morally good policy, though it may not be a feasible one; but I cannot see much substance in Mr. Brailsford's hope that the Yugoslav revolution indicates the possibility of other revolutions in Europe. It is quite possible that the Germans will take it as a warning-signal to put more economic and less military substance into their "new order". If so, they will take the point out of our still non-existent policy for a better "new order" than theirs.

The Economic Scene

FOR there is no evidence at all that Yugoslavia wishes to contract out of Germany's economic "new order". Our press commentators speak as though the economic and political aspects of the German "new order" are one and indivisible, and that Yugoslavia has rejected both. The idea proceeds from a combination of wishful thinking and ignorance. Its publicists should read an article in Mr. Keynes's organ, *The Economic Journal*, by C. W. Guillebaud on "Hitler's New Economic Order for Europe," which a kind correspondent has sent me.

Mr. Guillebaud examines Dr. Funk's plan carefully and concludes (1) that it is a good plan, because it will raise standards of living and give security; (2) that it will have to be adopted "after the war," if there is to be lasting peace; (3) that Great Britain herself cannot carry the plan through; and (4) that, because of Germany's geographical

position, organizing and industrial ability, and population, she will have to be entrusted with the job, whether the war is won or lost. Put bluntly, Hitler (or rather Dr. Funk) in this important matter of the economic future of Europe has got us into a position where he can say "Heads I win; tails you lose."

National Unity

TWO passages in Mr. Churchill's speech on March 28 as leader of the Conservative Party particularly impressed me. One was his curious insistence that the Conservative Party had made "the greatest sacrifices" in forming the National Government. Oddly enough, Mr. Churchill was referring to the "sacrifice" by Conservatives of their political careers. I suppose that is how a politician looks at things: and that the formation of a national government is essentially a process whereby some people lose their jobs and others get them. The second passage was this:—

It is because of the interests of national unity that I have forborne to produce a catalogue of war aims or peace aims; every one knows quite well what we are fighting about, but if you try to set forth in a catalogue what will be the exact settlement of affairs in a period which, as I say, is unforeseeable; if you attempt to do that you will find that the moment you leave the area of pious platitudes you will descend into the arena of heated controversy, and that would militate against the efforts which we are making, and we could not in justice to our country take such a step.

Everyone may know what we are fighting about: very few know what we are fighting for. But the answer is: To win. As Mr. Churchill put it:

Without taking any final or irrevocable view of what may be desirable in these matters, I may say that I think that the simpler objects are the best. Life, which is so complicated and difficult, in great matters nearly always presents itself in simple terms. For the time being the defeat of Hitler and Hitlerism is a sufficient war aim and will open the door to every worthy peace aim.

I may say that I have inserted a comma after "difficult," because I think that was what Mr. Churchill meant. But had I been unkind, I should have one after "matters".

"P.S." Herbert

THAT brings me, by a natural transition, to the first "Postscript" of Mr. Priestley's successor, Mr. A. P. Herbert. It was poorly delivered—technically, a bad performance. But it was a remarkable one: for I do not suppose Mr. Herbert was speaking to

instructions. Indeed, I do not believe that he would accept instructions.

But the effect was uncannily like that of a rather indifferent understudy of Mr. Churchill. Praise of our splendid and tried institutions: a cheerful contempt for any suggestion that we need offer any plan of peace to Europe: an amazingly frank confession that it is impossible for Britain honestly to have any definite peace-aims—if we satisfy the Poles and the Czechs, the Germans will never disown Hitler—and a quite open repudiation of everything which Mr. Priestley has implied or advocated. And it began with a recommendation that Mr. Priestley should enter Parliament—apparently in order that, like Mr. Herbert and Socrates, he should come to know that he knew nothing.

A New Complacency

THERE are many signs that a fresh wave of ignorant complacency is sweeping over the country. Our military and naval successes of late have been remarkable. And the mind of the nation thinks only in terms of military success or reverses. The idea that the problem of post-war Europe cannot be thus solved finds no entrance at all into the British imagination. At other times, I suppose, this lack of imagination has served this country well. It is the quality of "not knowing when we are beaten." But today, I confess, this quality seems to me to open the straight way to perdition.

I may be hopelessly wrong. I hope I am. Assuredly, I should be a much happier man if I did not have a sinking feeling when Mr. Churchill says: "I cannot pretend that I took up my task with any other feeling than invincible confidence." I just cannot understand how, even if Mr. Churchill were assured by a private messenger from heaven that Germany would capitulate by Christmas, he could feel "invincible confidence" about the future. That he does, is unquestionable; and unspeakably alarming. It is, to me, the "nec plus ultra" of unawareness. So I will try to persuade myself that I am a little mad.

"Normal" Food Barter

THE "incident" of French shore batteries in Algeria firing upon British ships engaged in intercepting a convoy of French merchant-vessels, and our returning the fire, is serious. If these recent hostilities are allowed to develop much further, we shall be creating a new enemy—and a more serious one—to take Italy's place.

To justify our policy, much is being made of an extensive barter arrangement between occupied and unoccupied France. No less amounts than 800,000 tons of wheat, 200,000 tons of sugar, 800,000 tons of potatoes are to be sent into Vichy France; in return for which Vichy France is to send 190,000 head of cattle, 600,000 calves and hogs, and 600,000 head of "small livestock" (whatever that may mean). It is a huge transaction; and *The Times* (Mar. 27) admits that "the exchanges are quite normal in themselves." Indeed, so far as we can tell, they represent a centrally controlled resumption of the ordinary internal commerce of France. But the suggestion is that Admiral Darlan, in announcing that the Germans were allowing wheat into Vichy France, concealed the fact that it was part of a barter arrangement.

Now, if I remember aright, the amount of wheat which Darlan mentioned as being allowed into Vichy France when he spoke bitterly of the superior German generosity was 2 million quintals. A quintal is a cwt.; 2 million quintals is therefore 100,000 tons—an eighth part of the amount now bargained for. It looks as though a deliberate effort were being made to mislead the American public, in order to turn it against a relaxation of the blockade in favour of occupied France. And this is borne out by the full text of *The Times* comment:

The exchanges are quite normal in themselves, but might be differently judged in America, where many influences are trying to obtain from Britain the right to send supplies to unoccupied France.

Honesty Essential

THE expected result has apparently been achieved: for in *The Sunday Times* (Mar. 30) I read:

The existence of this agreement has produced the most unfavourable reactions in Washington, where until then there had been strong tendencies in favour of relaxing the British blockade for the benefit of "neutral" unoccupied France.

The tendency now is to limit shipments to children's food and the like, to be distributed by the American Red Cross only. Thus the Vichy case against the British blockade no longer cuts any ice in America. Here is a matter on which British good faith is crucially concerned. If the exchanges of that barter arrangement are, as *The Times* says, quite normal, then it is very wicked that they should be represented in America as quite abnormal, in order to justify our refusal to allow supplies of food to enter Vichy France. Incidentally, I have looked for confirmation of the New Statesman's report that half the cargoes entering Marseilles go to Germany; and I notice that no Government spokesman goes so far as to say that.

Not that I pretend this problem of the French blockade is a simple one. What I do maintain is that it is a matter on which we should be honest. Vichy France does not import 800,000 tons of wheat for fun; for that is practically 1 cwt. per head of her population. If she needs that amount of wheat it is collogue of her real condition.

Liverpool Court-Martial

THE fullest report of the court-martial proceedings against officers and NCOs for alleged assault of COs in a non-combatant corps is that of the *Manchester Guardian* (Mar. 25 onward). The proceedings can hardly be described as judicial; but perhaps courts-martial are not intended to be. Here is a characteristic extract from the Judge-Advocate's summing up in the first case.

There are a number of young men who are not prepared to fight, or serve their

(Continued on page 4.)

LAURENCE HOUSMAN states

The Case for Conscientious Objection

THE fight for liberty of conscience in this country has nearly always been the fight of a minority, and the minority has won.

Was liberty won merely because the majority were indifferently tolerant, or because it had a decent, though belated sense of justice; or was it because failure to enforce the law against the conscientious resister brought the law into disrepute? All these reasons may have contributed to the result; but probably the last was the one that counted most.

It was a wise London magistrate who said, thirty years ago, during the fight for women's suffrage, "Bad laws don't get mended till they are broken." And the implication of that remark is that we have a duty laid on us to break bad laws, when we cannot otherwise get them mended.

The history of law-breaking—of non-violent resistance to bad laws, more especially during the last 350 years, makes interesting, and encouraging, reading for those who believe in liberty of conscience as a safeguard and not a danger to the body politic; and in Mr. R. S. W. Pollard's book of concise history, *Conscience and Liberty* (Allen and Unwin, 2/6 net), covering more than that period, the reader will find much to encourage him. But the author does not only give us the history of events; he gives also a well-reasoned argument for the rights of conscience and for the value of its free exercise, even though the conscience is a fallible instrument, and may make wrong decisions.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Why is it, then, that the individual conscience has any case for standing out against the general will of the

community? Surely it is that the principle of freedom of conscience makes a true man; and a true man is of more worth not only to himself but to his fellow man than one who dodges his conscience and consents to do what he believes to be wrong.

A free man may make mistakes; but he is a higher product of human evolution and of more social value than one who gives blind obedience to authority, on the plea that if authority makes mistakes the blame rests with authority alone. With such sheepish encouragement authority becomes totalitarian; and the responsibility for allowing it so to become is with the individual.

The practical value of "trial and error" as a means to right ends, has become a scientific axiom; but the value of that process does not rest with science alone; it has also a spiritual value. Virtue possessed but not exercised becomes practically non-existent; and man's conscience is the guardian and monitor of his virtues. But it is by no means certain that man will always exercise his virtues to right ends; that he will be resolute only for good; courageous only when his cause is just; patient only in the pursuit of a wise policy.

That virtue should be so earmarked is very desirable, but until that law of perfection can be attained it is more important that man's virtues should have free outlet though liable to misuse, than that he should give them no exercise at all, because his judgment in applying them is fallible. And as a man's conscience

embraces and directs his virtues, the argument for the active assertion of conscience is the same. If he is to be a true man, God helping him, he can do no other.

FUNCTION OF THE STATE

It is on these lines—on the value to the State of the integrity of the individual—that Mr. Robert Pollard bases his claim for liberty of conscience.

He goes even further and, as a convinced individualist, claims that the State is not the master but the servant of the individual, that is to say that its true function and service lies in the fostering and protection of the free individuality of all its members. "Everyone must find out for himself," he says in a concluding passage, "the place where obedience to the law would mean treachery to the paramount claims of conscience."

"We have shown," he goes on, "that indissolubly linked with the freedom of conscience is the question of liberty of opinion and action. Against the tyranny of the State the conscientious objector stands for the right to tell his fellow-citizens the result of his conscientious thinking, and to ask them to examine and educate their own consciences."

For that examination and education this booklet of less than 120 pages offers good service to honest minds; it is well written and well documented; unprovocative in form, but also quite uncompromising in its conclusions.

C.O.s in Agriculture

A COMMUNITY Chairman concludes his survey begun last week:

So far I have dealt exclusively with the COs in relation to their work and the conditions under which they have to work, and before leaving this side of the question I would appeal to those concerned on both sides to show by their actions a realization of the intensely urgent and humanitarian nature of agriculture in these days, and to seek always that spirit of good will which will result in co-operation for the greatest good to all. It is not enough for Labour Officers to impress on the men the urgency of the job if they do not provide adequate tools and healthy living conditions; and on the other hand no man should complain of the conditions and equipment unless he is honestly willing to do his bit when given the opportunity.

Fortunately there is an aspect of the "secret service in agriculture" which has a much more direct bearing on those ideals for which conscientious objectors have made their stand, and that is in the strengthening of both body and character which the experience of the new life has produced in those who have determined not to let their spirits be defeated. Community life, with all its opportunities, for exchange of ideas and study of human nature, has been very much the order of things for the COs employed by the committees; it has created a much deeper understanding and a broadening of outlook which should prove invaluable to the future of pacifism and war resistance. The diversity of sects which comprise the average agricultural community of COs is but a testimony to the number of reasons which can be put forward to urge that war is an intolerable evil.

Furthermore, the hardships which COs have not infrequently experienced have in the majority of cases served only to increase their determination and indomitability of spirit. Characters have stood out for their cheerfulness in times of trouble, for their truly pacifist living, for their integrity of conscience, and for their sympathetic understanding; and these, by their example, have inspired others to better living and to a nobler testimony to their cause.

HOPE FOR FUTURE

It is in the seed of this inspiration that there lies the pacifist hope for the future. Many COs long, not unnaturally, for the day when they may return to their old jobs, but wherever they go they will take with them a better understanding of their fellows and especially of the lot of the agricultural labourer. But others have found the romance of life on the land, the spirit, so near to idealism, which lies in the quiet, steady, but unconquerable forces of nature, and these may remain to bring into agriculture a new contribution to its culture and intellect.

It is the prerogative of the pacifist to find a constructive response to every situation, and yet we must be grateful to those in authority that in the midst of so much destruction the pacifists have been given such a fine opportunity for really constructive work on the land.

Let those concerned, then, see to it that their job is done well; and, though their heads may be in the skies of idealism, and their hearts high with courage and hope, let it be said of them that their feet were planted firmly on the good earth. So shall we see springing up not only the good gifts of the harvest, but the tree of Peace, and the Kingdom of God on earth.

AREA DEVELOPMENT

In connection with the Development Committee recently set up by the PPU National Council, the following have been elected by the Area representatives to serve with the five members elected by the National Council: Richard Bishop, Denis Riley, Bill Grindley, Leslie Kirkley, Charles Baldwin. It is hoped that this committee will be able to meet on Friday, April 18.

GROUP NOTES

GROWTH

by JOHN BARCLAY

THE most appreciative audience to address is one of children between the ages of 10 and 18. It is also the most critical. The only hope lies in complete honesty and the recognition of the fact that boys and girls of 14 to 16 are fully conscious beings. On their side they realize that many adults are pompous and self-important and that they themselves are rapidly reaching maturity. There is no clear line dividing the adult from the child, as can be seen from the number of adult-children and childish adults one meets.

Political parties and football teams often have "nurseries" in which youthful talent is trained and modelled. It is here that tradition is blended with radical innovations, and sharp differences are eradicated. Revolutionary pioneer bodies like the Peace Pledge Union need the dynamite of new ideas and should be able to stand up to the impact of change without the use of such nurseries. If the common search for Truth is accepted, the distance separating the generations can be bridged by friendship.

Self-importance is anathema and youthful arrogance a blight. We shall attract new members only when it is clear that our movement is a free association of young and old depending upon one another for stability and accepting both the wisdom of experience and the impatient criticism of inexperience. Each group is a cell within which the new seed germinates. It is quality rather than quantity that is all-important. Our value as a movement and its influence on events in the days to come will depend very largely on the personal integrity of the present active membership.

We are a "mixed grill" it is true, but all the better for that! Let us keep our sense of humour in spite of the difficulties ahead.

A. G. M.

Applications for tickets (delegates and individual members) for the AGM must be sent in writing to Headquarters. Final agendas, voting papers, and tickets are now being sent out, so if you have not applied, please do so at once.

To London Members.—Many delegates are needing hospitality. Can you help by offering it? Write to John Barclay, Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1.

How Shall We Repay America?

To the Editor of Peace News.

THE methods of repaying America for munitions of war referred to in Peace News of March 21 are of considerable interest.

One cannot take exception to the suggestion of repayment in the form of raw materials or services, as this is the only sensible method by which one country can repay another. It will mean, of course, that we send real wealth out of the country for which there is no return, but if we insist on indulging in war that, perhaps, is unavoidable.

The suggestion that payment may take the form of "guarantees that when peace comes a certain import percentage of American farm produce will be guaranteed" gives rise to interesting speculation. Does this mean, I wonder, that the United States expects to be paid for this farm produce with British exports of goods or services? In this case the relation of the transaction to payment for armaments does not seem very clear.

Or does it mean that America is so much enslaved by the "work-complex" that goes with orthodox financial views that she is actually insisting that, in order to provide her with the means of, or rather the excuse for, providing employment (and therefore wage-money) for her agriculturists, she insists that we "pay" for our armaments by allowing her to send us farm produce? The latter seems an extraordinary arrangement, but in the land which was the

birth-place of the wonderful new industry of "not raising hogs" (the farmer being paid by the State according to the number of pigs he didn't rear) anything seems possible!

If it be the case that the American Government does suffer from the work-complex to such an exaggerated extent, we must, however, be careful that we do not imitate it, even in a minor degree. Your correspondent suggests that if America were allowed to send us farm produce it would be detrimental to British agriculture, and I venture to think that this is too narrow a view of the problem and one which regards work for the British agriculturists as of more importance than wealth for the British nation, presumably because the British agriculturist, if out of work, is not to be allowed money to buy his fair share of his country's wealth even if the wealth is there to be bought in abundance.

Assuming that we do have to pay America for the munitions and that she is willing to accept as a curious form of "payment" the right to send us her farm produce, then the more she is encouraged to do so the better, for on balance this is preferable to the alternative of our giving her goods or services which are a dead loss to us, seeing that we get no more goods or services in exchange.

BEDFORD

Cairnsmore,
Newton Stewart.

Women's Section

Compulsory Registration

IN the debate on woman-power in the House on March 20, Mr. Assheton, Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, said: "I have been asked on more than one occasion whether there will be any exceptions for women who have conscientious objections, and my answer is that I do not think the question will arise. If any woman had a conscientious objection to making munitions there are plenty of other useful opportunities of serving . . . to which no conscientious objection would be likely to be advanced."

This either denotes a lack of understanding of the situation or is an attempt to avoid the issue. Women are now to be conscripted and they are denied the right of conscientious objection, on the ground that the objection is unlikely to arise.

There is little likelihood that women will ever be conscripted to fight, but their objection to freeing a man to do what they would themselves refuse to do, or to making the weapons they would themselves refuse to use, is as strong and sincere as the objection of the young conscientious objector called to military service.

THE PROCEDURE

The regulations for registration now issued are quite short. As each age group is called upon they will be required to register at the Labour Exchange. The next step is that they will be called to an interview with a woman officer of the department who will obtain from them further details about their qualifications and domestic responsibilities. After that the women whose services are required will be called up.

Some of those who are due to register on April 19 intend to write to the Minister of Labour to say that they refuse to register because they have a conscientious objection to taking part in war or freeing a man to take part in war.

The penalties for not registering have not been specifically stated, so we must presume that they will be the same as those laid down for general offences under the Defence Regulations, viz.: on summary conviction, imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months, or a fine not exceeding £100, or both; if the offence is regarded as serious enough for indictment (perhaps an unlikely contingency) the penalty is imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or a fine not exceeding £500, or both.

CHANCE TO APPEAL

Some others think that they will make their conscientious objection clear by writing a statement across the form of registration after filling in their names and address, etc. Should they be called up in spite of either of these modes of procedure they may have an opportunity of going before a committee to appeal and can then make clear their objection to war.

It may be that the right of appeal on the ground of conscience will be denied them, or that the committee will not be empowered to exempt anyone on grounds of objection to war. This would seem to involve having to arrest the objector who refuses to undertake the work to which she is allocated. At present this does not seem very likely to happen.

I shall be very glad to help with information and advice if those in a difficulty will ring me up, write to me, or come and see me.

SYBIL MORRISON

THE Group Letter is now being sent only to those groups for whom the record slip has been returned. If you are not receiving this letter, it is for this reason, and it is hoped that you will communicate with Stuart Morris, Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1, asking to be restored to the list.

JOHN W. COWLING'S
—Circulation Notes—

THE CAMPAIGN OPENS

THIS week's issue marks the opening of the campaign to bring the circulation of Peace News up to 20,000.

At the time of writing it is too early to say how many copies have been ordered this week, but from time to time I hope to report progress. From the number of orders already received for the special leaflet about Peace News, however, I judge that this will prove a popular method of introducing the paper to likely readers.

To those ordering leaflets I have two pleas to make: 1. Please state whether you want leaflets "A", "B", or "C" (descriptions of these three types—designed for use in different ways—have been sent to all group leaders, and others interested). 2. Please send cash with orders.

Failure to observe these two simple points has already involved a fair amount of work in returning a number of orders to senders.

To anyone who can help in the campaign but has not yet received the circular giving details—or who is not a member of a group which has done so—I will gladly send a copy on request.

Commentary

(Continued from page 2.)

country except in the way they wish. There has been in the witness-box man after man who is not prepared to take that responsibility which has to be shouldered by others. If it is not shouldered the whole Empire and everything we stand for will crack. On the other hand, we have in the dock a man who gives service to his country and is prepared to give his life for it—a man whom we cannot do without if the country is to survive. The law does not allow us to enter into questions of this kind.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that the accused CSM was acquitted. That the officer defending should speak of the witnesses as "possibly the most dangerous Fifth Column we have to face today", simply because they were COs, may be let pass; but the language of the Judge-Advocate is, to put it mildly, memorable.

The Pope's Appeal

THE Pope is drafting a new peace appeal to all the warring nations, which will be broadcast throughout the world at Easter. So runs an agency message which I have found in only one newspaper. It is no use pretending that there is much hope that it will be listened to. And yet I take comfort in the fact that the greatest supernatural Christian leader in the world is determined to make such an appeal. Make a point of listening in to it, for it is, alas, unlikely that it will be printed in the press.

CAN THE DICTATORS HOLD EUROPE ?

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Stephen Hobhouse

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The New National Service Bill

"Without implying any approval of the measure as a whole", Principal G. A. Sutherland as chairman) recorded, in a letter in the Manchester Guardian on March 27, the view of the Manchester Advisory Committee for Pacifists "that the following features of the National Service Bill now before Parliament are particularly objectionable":—

1 Section 13 of the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939, provides that conscientious objectors who have failed to obtain exemption and have been sentenced by court-martial to at least three months' imprisonment for military offences committed on conscientious grounds may have their cases reheard by an appellate tribunal.

The Bill gives no such right of rehearing to conscientious objectors who, having similarly failed to establish their objections, are sentenced by civil courts to imprisonment up to two years for offences committed on conscientious grounds. One would have thought that readiness to accept a severer penalty was even more convincing evidence of sincerity.

2 The Bill provides for the calling up for civil defence of a CO conditionally registered, whatever the condition.

Thus a CO accepting a condition that does not offend his conscience can have that condition varied without his consent. Had the original condition been repugnant to his conscience he could have appealed against it and might have had the condition varied or even been registered uncondi-

tionally. Now he has lost the right of appeal. If the determinations of tribunals as to conditions are to be flouted in this way, there is no logical reason why those men registered as COs without conditions should not similarly be made liable to be called up for civil defence.

3 Section 5 of the Bill gives the Minister the right either to decide for himself or to refer to a tribunal the question whether a CO had "reasonable excuse" for non-fulfilment of a condition, and he may have a man prosecuted for such an offence even where no tribunal has examined the facts.

Without expressing any opinion on the merits of the tribunal system, the committee is clear that, as that system has been set up specifically to deal with questions of conscience, the Minister should be required to refer every such case to a tribunal, and should be debarred from instituting a prosecution where no such reference has been made.

MINISTER AND A BAN

POINTING out that every person has a legal right to be a conscientious objector, the Ministry of Health have ordered Mitcham Borough Council to rescind a decision to suspend Mr. A. Riley, a sanitary inspector who is a CO.

37's TO REGISTER

Men born in 1903 will be required to register under the Armed Forces Act tomorrow week, April 12. As an alternative to military service, men in this age-group may join the Police War Reserve, the AFS, or first-aid parties of the Civil Defence services. Men joining these services independently are not relieved of the duty to register.

Fire-Fighting C.O.s

"DON'T let that spirit creep into the AFS," was the answer given by Mr. John Horner, general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, to a delegate at a regional conference of the union's AFS section in Cardiff on Sunday who asked whether they had "a right to refuse to work with" conscientious objectors "conscripted" into the service.

REFUSED FIRE-WATCHING

Mr. G. K. Siddal, a Manchester conscientious objector aged 40, was fined £5, with the alternative of 25 days' imprisonment at Manchester last week, for refusing to undertake fire-watching duties over his own business premises.

Mr. Siddal stated that fire-watching was part of the war organization and declared that he would not alter his views.

COMPULSORY ORDER

Manchester Emergency Committee announced last week that it had asked the Regional Commissioner to apply a compulsory registration order to the city under the fire-prevention legislation. This has been done, and men between 18 and 30 are to register tomorrow (Sat.). It is stated.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Security told a questioner in Parliament last week that it was clear that the Compulsory Enrolment Order for fire-watching would need to be applied in certain areas, and added that it would not be in the public interest to disclose the number or location of those areas before arrangements had been made. Manchester is the first.

MUTINY CHARGE DROPPED

The Central Board for Conscientious Objectors, which (as stated in Peace News on February 28) took up the matter of the mutiny charge against five COs at Dingle Vale, reports that the charge has now been dropped.

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PERSONAL

ACCOMPANIST wanted for practice with baritone; S.W. London. Box 732, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

CO's WIFE offers share home with woman pacifist in return for help with children. Wright, Addison Square, Cromford, Matlock.

UNIVERSITY graduate and wife, trained teacher, offer home to one or two evacuee children, farm; school near; academic assistance given; full responsibility. Eric Chapman, Harthill, near Sheffield.

SITUATIONS VACANT

CHAUFFEUR mechanic, knowledge of London, North and Central chiefly, able to run a car, service and maintain cars. Energetic worker.—S., 3 Church Hill Rd., East Barnet.

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MOTHER'S HELP (25-40), plain cooking, modern bungalow, rural surroundings, 1 hour Reading, Methodist family, 3 children (2 school), help with rough. Write with age, experience, and wage required to Box 717, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

PRINTING Compositors wanted for jobbing and book work. Congenial country works. State fully experience, age, if married, wage.—Box 724, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

THE International Voluntary Service for Peace now requires volunteers for motor-driving and maintenance in an East London relief service; also for demolition work and for forestry. "Sisters" for cooking, washing, etc., are also needed. Write for information to the Secretary, 1 Lyddon Terrace, Leeds, 2.

WANTED. Handyman. Building maintenance, or would train one. Cross, Jobbing Builder, 4 Moorfield Rd., Cowley, Uxbridge.

WAREHOUSEMAN or woman wanted. Retail store London West End. Main business domestic glass. Previous experience not necessary, but must be strong and willing to do anything. State age, previous occupation and salary required. Box 723, Peace News, Blackstock Rd., N.4.

YOUNG WOMAN for help in guest house and cafe; live in. "Oasis Cafe," Bramley, Guildford.

SITUATIONS & WORK WANTED

PACIFIST COMPOSITOR desires situation (knowledge linotype and intertype); exempt; North London district preferred. Box 728, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

PACIFIST COUPLE, wife Austrian, expecting baby, man C.O. awaiting Government's pleasure, seek employment. Qualifications: wife, handicrafts, cooking, housework, etc.; man, radio engineering (8 years), electric wiring, driving (6 years); both adaptable. Box 727, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

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Subscription Rates:

Home: Quarterly, 3s 3d Yearly 12s 6d

Abroad: Quarterly, 2s 9d Yearly 10s 6d

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